



Working to Protect and Preserve the Gulf of Mexico

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United States Army Corps of Engineers Listening Session
Arlington, Texas

Please find enclosed the comments of the Gulf Restoration Network (GRN) regarding the issues raised by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) at its August 10, 2000 "Listening Session" in Arlington, TX. We have included an excerpt from our 1999 report, *Destruction by Design: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Continuing Assault on America's Environment*, which list reforms of Corps practices and policies that we feel would better serve the Corps constituents. We have also included a copy of the full report for the record.

The GRN is a network of forty-four local, regional and national groups dedicated to protecting and preserving the biological resources of the Gulf of Mexico. We have members in all five Gulf States.

REFORM DOES NOT REQUIRE A MAJOR FEAT OF ENGINEERING

The 1996 Costly Corps report presented recommendations to address the many problems outlined in that Report. Some of those recommendations were directed to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and were based on our knowledge of Corps operations and the problems we had experienced in dealing with that agency. Other recommendations were directed to Congress and sought much needed changes in water resource laws that allow abuses by the Corps to continue.

Sadly, over the last three years little, if anything, has changed. The Corps proceeds with business as usual and abuses persist, the Gulf of Mexico region continues to lose wetlands at an alarming rate, damages associated with floods and hurricanes continue to rise, water quality continues to decline, and navigation projects that have little economic value are still built at a cost of millions of dollars each year.

We continue to believe that the following recommendations address the many problems that plague the Corps.